related to credit, marketing, trade protection, labour related returns/ inspections, registration of SSI units, Government purchases, etc.

(b) As part of the formulation of the draft legislation, consultations have been carried out with various stakeholders including the Ministry of Finance, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), financial institutions, etc. in addition, the issue of extending credit to the Small Scale Industrial (SSI) sector has been discussed with the heads and representatives of various commercials banks in the last meeting of the Reserve Bank of India's Standing Advisory Committee to review the flow of institutional credit to the SSI sector held on 1st Sept., 2003. The Committee is headed by the Deputy Governor, RBI and the Ministry of SSI and Ministry of Finance are also members. The Minister of State (Expenditure, Banking and Insurance) also took a meeting with the Chief Executives of the public sector banks on 25th June, 2003 in which the issue of lending SSI sector was discussed.

(c) As per the information received from RBI, the latest available balance sheet data for Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) indicates an increase in spread for SCBs from 2.57 per cent in 2001 -02 to 2.77 per cent in 2002-03.

(d) and (e) Finance Ministry/RBI have already initiated policy measures to provide support to the small scale industries which *inter-alia* include simplified norms for computation of working capital, collateral free loan upto Rs. 25 lakhs in deserving cases, enhancement of composite loan to Rs. 50 lakhs, introduction of Laghu Udyami Credit Card Scheme, provision of credit at interest within a band of 2% plus/ minus their Prime Lending Rate (PLR) etc.

Sick SSIs

1089. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 36,227 small scale industrial units have fallen sick by the end of the year 2003;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if not, the actual figures thereof and the quantum of capital invested therein; and

(c) the percentage of the sick units out of the SSI unit registered during 2002-03?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) As per the latest data available from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), which compiles data on sick Small Scale Industrial (SSI) units financed by the scheduled commercial banks, there were 1,67,980 sick SSI units in the country with an outstanding amount Rs. 5706.35 crore as at the end of March, 2003.

(c) The sick SSI units constituted around 6% of the total number of SSI units registered with at the State/UT Directorate of Industries at the end of the year 2002-03.

Building of satellite vehicle

1090. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ISRO has been approached by other countries in building satellite vehicles; if so, the details of those countries and the kind of help asked for, by them; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that ISRO proposes to double its transponder capacity in a phased manner to meet the growing demand; if so, the details of the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SPACE (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. iSRO proposes to increase the transponder capacity substantially in the INSAT system in a phased manner to meet the growing demand. The number of transponders in the INSAT system at present is 133. It is planned to increase the transponder capacity by launching 4th generation INSAT satellites.